Comprehensive TV code for content regulation

1156. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian television is set to get a comprehensive code for content regulation and a new content code has been prepared by Government about broadcasters what they can air at what time and what they can't;

(b) if so, whether the Ministry has already discussed the code with television industry;

(c) whether the code marks the first major step in introducing systems in an industry which frequently debates moral policing by Government but triggers equally frequent discussions on inappropriate or offensive content;

(d) if so, what was the outcome of the discussion held; and

(e) by when this code is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) to (e) Provisions for regulating content of Indian TV already exist under Rules 6 and 7 of the Cable TV Rules, 1994 and are implemented in cases of complaints. To make the code more comprehensive and specific, a Committee has been constituted for reviewing Programme and Advertising Codes prescribed under the Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and rules framed thereunder and the guidelines for certification of films prescribed under the Cinematograph Act, 1952 and for drafting a new content code. A draft of the proposed Code has also been posted on the website of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting *www.mib.nic.in*. The Committee comprises the representatives of broadcasting organisations apart from civil society and consumer groups and the Code has been discussed with them. The responses have been both for and against the Code. The Committee has had six meetings so far. The next meeting has not been scheduled.

Guidelines for news channels

1157. SHRI P.R. RANJAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is considering separate list of guidelines for news channels working in India; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) A Committee has been constituted for reviewing Programme and Advertising Codes prescribed under the Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and rules framed thereunder and the guidelines for certification of films prescribed under the Cinematograph Act, 1952 and drafting a new content code. A draft of the proposed Code, including a proposed chapter on guidelines for news channels, has also been posted on the website of the Ministry

of Information and Broadcasting *www.mib.nic.in*. The Committee has had six meetings so far. The next meeting has not been scheduled.

(b) Does not arise.

Telecast of advertisements on pay channels

1158. SHRI BANWARI LAL KANCHHAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is provision to show advertisements between the programmes on pay channels being telecast on cable T.V.;

(b) if so, the time period and policy rules for showmg advertisements between the programmes on pay channels as pay channel companies are paid monthly subscription per channel by cable operators;

(c) whether Government would consider to impose ban on showing advertisements between the programmes on pay channels; and

(d) if so, by when, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Rule 7(11) of the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994 as amended has provided that no programme shall carry advertisements exceeding twelve minutes per hour, which may include upto ten minutes per hour of commercial advertisements, and upto two minutes per hour of a channel's self promotional programmes.

(c) No such proposal is under consideration of Government.

(d) Ban on advertisements on pay channels may push up subscription rates of such channels and may not be in the interest of viewers.

Deplorable condition of AIR stations

1159. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that AIR stations are in a deplorable condition with some lying defunct for more than 3 months in Assam and North East; and

(b) whether any initiative has been taken to enhance the Radio Networks for commercialization taking cue from other States and cities?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) No, Sir. All the stations in North East including Assam are working satisfactorily.

(b) Prasar Bharati has set-up an exclusive Marketing Division at Guwahati in 2006 which is working as a Single Window for catering to the needs of Advertisers/Clients of Assam and the entire North-Eastern Region. This division accepts bookings for and on behalf of all the AIR stations of Assam and North-Eastern Region. With the